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July 29, 1996

Superfund Fact Sheet

Monsanto Elemental Phosphorus Plant Caribou County, Idaho

You're Invited to Comment on a Proposed Cleanup Plan

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is seeking comments on a proposed cleanup action plan for contaminated soils and ground water at the Monsanto Chemical (Soda Springs) Superfund site.

This fact sheet summarizes the proposed cleanup plan. Detailed information presented in technical reports can be reviewed at the Monsanto Site Information Repository located at the Soda Springs Public Library. Copies of the proposed plan can be obtained by contacting any of the representatives listed on the last page of this factsheet.

EPA, in consultation with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW), will select a final cleanup remedy after public comment has been considered. Your input on the alternatives and the information that supports those alternatives is important to the cleanup remedy process. Based on public comment or new information, EPA and IDHW may modify the recommended cleanup plan or select another alternative.

Please send your written comments **by August 30, 1996**, to:

Tim Brincefield, Project Manager
US EPA Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98101

Please come to a public meeting

We'd like to invite you to learn more about the proposed cleanup plan at a public meeting on **August 13, 1996, at 7:00 p.m. at the Soda Springs High School**. At the meeting you can ask questions about and/or provide comments on the proposed cleanup plan alternatives. EPA, IDHW and Monsanto representatives will be there to discuss the studies, answer questions, and accept both oral and written comments.

What Needs Cleaning Up at Monsanto?

Monsanto investigated the site and found that both soils and ground water in and around the plant are contaminated with radium, arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, fluoride and selenium at levels that could pose risks to human health, assuming long-term residential exposures. (see Figure 1)

The primary health concern is an increased risk of cancer for people who, over many years, could be exposed to contaminated soil or may drink contaminated water.

Under Superfund law, addressing cleanup of hazardous waste contamination, this potential risk requires some type of cleanup action.

No residences are currently located on the identified contaminated areas, although some privately owned land directly adjacent to the plant boundary is considered part of the affected area. The City of Soda Springs drinking water supplies are unaffected by the identified ground water contamination.



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The contamination is largely the result of historic emissions and releases from Monsanto's processing of elemental phosphate ore. Sources of soil contamination, such as the ore stockpiles and slag piles, are being addressed by Monsanto through facility-wide air pollution and dust controls measures, health and safety programs, and other methods. The sources of ground water contamination (a leaking hydroclarifier and unlined storage pits) were contained by the company during the mid-1980s, although it is estimated that some of the identified contaminants will continue to persist in the ground water for approximately 5-30 more years.

What Are the Cleanup Options and What Does EPA Recommend?

Monsanto evaluated a range of cleanup alternatives which would prevent people from being exposed to the contamination in the future, including:

- 1) No Action (used as a baseline for comparison);
- 2) Ground Water Monitoring Only;
- 3) Land and Ground Water Use Restrictions;
- 4) Bioremediation of Soils (using plants to draw out contaminants), combined with Ground Water Use Restrictions;
- 5) Excavation of Soils for Disposal within the facility combined with Ground Water Use Restrictions.

As shown in Figure 1, the extent of uncontrolled contamination is limited to the soils/ground water immediately surrounding the plant. The main sources of the contamination within the plant appear to have been appropriately controlled by Monsanto; current land use surrounding the site is a mix of industrial, agricultural set-aside, and grazing land, not exclusively residential.

EPA's proposed cleanup plan calls for land and ground water use restrictions to prevent any future residential exposure to contaminated soils and ground water in the affected area. Specifically, the proposal calls for:

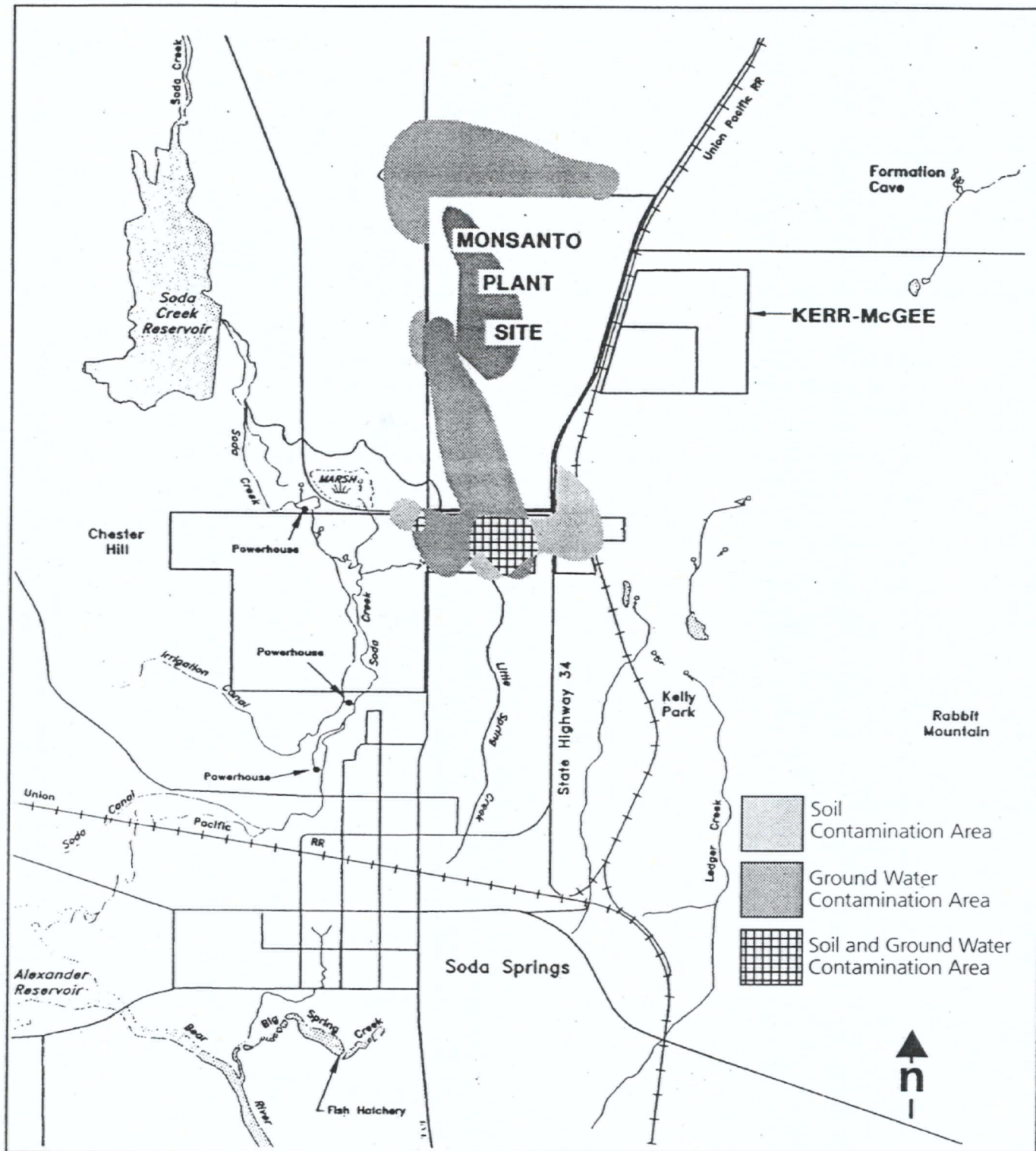
- *Land Use Restrictions to prevent future residential exposures to contaminated soils surrounding the facility. (As a contingency, if such restrictions cannot be established within a reasonable timeframe, affected soils would be evaluated for possible cleanup via bioremediation; if bioremediation proves to be ineffective the affected soils would be excavated and disposed within the Monsanto Plant.)*
- *Ground Water Use Restrictions (such as deed restrictions or a prohibition on drinking water wells in the affected area) to prevent people from drinking ground water until it recovers to Federal Drinking Water Standards.*
- *No further cleanup action for air, surface water, Soda Creek sediments, and source piles/materials within the facility. Periodic monitoring and five-year reviews of the data would be conducted to confirm the success of past source control measures.*

The estimated cost of this preferred alternative is up to \$400,000 for initial capital costs, and approximately \$150,000 per year for dust control measures and groundwater monitoring, for a total of up to \$2,500,000.

What's Next?

EPA and IDHW will consider comments received during the public comment period before choosing a final cleanup action plan for the site. EPA will then prepare and publish a response to those comments, and the final cleanup action will be described in a document called a Record of Decision (ROD).

Figure 1.



Approximate Areas of Soil and Groundwater Contamination Above Background

Additional Information

If you are interested in learning more about the Monsanto site or the Superfund process, EPA encourages you to review documents at the Monsanto Site Information Repository. The Repository contains copies of site investigations and studies, the Community Relations Plan, and other materials related to the site. The Repository is maintained at:

Soda Springs Public Library
149 South Main Street
Soda Springs

An Administrative Record file, containing information upon which the selection of the cleanup remedy will be based, has also been established at both the Information Repository and at EPA's Regional office in Seattle. Your comments are welcome on any information in the administrative record and all of the cleanup options evaluated by EPA and Monsanto.

Questions?

For further information on the Monsanto site, please contact:

Mark Masarik, EPA Boise Office, (208) 334-9506

Tim Brincefield, EPA Project Manager, (206) 553-2100

Misha Vakoc, EPA Community Relations, (206) 553-8578

Or toll free at (800) 424-4372

For those with impaired hearing or speech, please contact EPA's telecommunications device for the hearing impaired (TDD) at (206) 553-1698. To ensure effective communications with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the numbers listed above. The meeting place for the public meeting August 13, 1996 is wheelchair accessible.



United States
Environmental Protection
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